3: Low G-5 (1844-1847) 1848
OC6 Iban OC6

of luxury. The Dyaks eat their food from the ground for a table; each having taken a portion of rice which he considers sufficient for him, this, if he be not provided with a plate, which many of them are, is placed upon a clean leaf of the Dillenia speciosa, and he dips his hand into the common stock of salt which is placed in the centre of the group. If they have flesh to their repast it is partaken of in a similar manner to the salt. They never drink during their meal, but on rising wash their hands and mouths, and afterwards take a draught of water from the bamboos, which are always kept full near the fire-place. Though they eat from the ground or floor of their houses, they rarely sit cross-legged upon it like the Malays, but have each a small block of wood about three inches in thickness, which they use as a seat by day and a pillow by night.

Around the walls of the apartment hang the gongs and other musical instruments, and such portions of their dress as they do not happen to be using, together with their spears, shields, and instruments of war. One side of the house always contains a rack, in which are placed the naked swords of the family, the sheaths hanging by their side. The doors of their houses are protected on the inside by a bar, but as pilfering is rare amongst these people, it is perhaps more to prevent intrusion when they wish for privacy, than as a protection against robbers. This is rendered evident by the doors, which cannot be fas-

5: Roth E-4 (no date) 1892 CC6 Iban OC6

out the smoke or to admit the fresh air. If the neighbours are near relations or intimate friends, as is often the case, a hole is cut in the wall which separates the room to avoid the necessity of a roundabout way into one anothers' apartments, and some villages are so arranged that one can traverse the entire length of the rear section of the building by means of these apertures without appearing on the verandah at all. There is no furniture in the room—none in fact being required. The floor is the occupiers' table and they squat to their meals. But there are plenty of mats to sit upon and baskets to pack their clothes in. Their cups and plates are hung in rows upon the walls as much for ornament as for use. Their valuables, such as old jars, gongs, etc., are ranged on three sides so as to present the most imposing appearance of wealth.

But the room is stuffy and untidy, and no wonder, seeing that there is but one for each family and this one is used as a kitchen as well as a mess room, as a nursery as well as a bed chamber. There can be no absolute privacy unless the door is barred to exclude the neighbours. Boys and girls keep running in and out and the dogs are always on the watch in the *tempuan* to spring in whenever the door swings open. The floor is swept after a fashion but the room is never deserted, and the roof is simply black with soot. The refuse is thrown into the piggery and poultry yard, which occupies the area or waste space under the house. Very little stench, if any, reaches the apartment from the ground, as the floor is raised too high above it to be affected by it. The *dapur* or fire-place is the only real piece of furniture in the room. It is built either to the right or to the left of the door set up against the wall of the *tempuan* and resembles an open cupboard, the lowest shelf resting upon the floor and the upper shelves being of lattice work instead of plank. The former is boarded all round and filled with clay. This is the fireplace and it is furnished with a few stones between which the pots are set. The shelf immediately above the fire is set apart for smoking fish and meat, etc. The shelves above this again are filled with firewood which being thoroughly dried is ready for use. The women, who do all the cooking, have also to keep these shelves supplied from the pile in the *tempuan*. As the smoke from the wood fire is not conducted to the roof by means of a chimney it spreads itself throughout the loft and blackens the beams and rafters until it finds its way out by the open window.[1]

[1] Elsewhere B. L. says: "They make a *palan* or raised platform and under it light a fire and heap it with dry twigs and fill the platform with split wood for drying as *bekal* (firewood). From the fire they take brands for other fires. They drive three pegs into the ground and place *prion* (jar) on top, fill

5: Roth E-4 (no date) 1892 OC6 Iban OC6

The *tempuan* or general thoroughfare is between the *bilieh* and the *ruai*. It is three feet in width and is paved with wood. It is furnished with a ladder or notched stick by which to reach the loft, a family mortar where the women pound their paddy with wooden pestles to free it from the husk, and a pile or two of firewood reared by the men for use inside. This passage is also used by the women to winnow their rice in, feed their dogs, and attend to their chickens, and by the men to wash the dirt off their feet when they come home from their work. The wall of the *tempuan* is sometimes elaborately painted in various patterns, and the spears of the family are thrust into the skirting board so as to be handy.

The *ruai* or verandah is in front of the *tempuan* and is as nearly as possible the same size as the *bilieh* from which it differs principally in being open on all sides and without any partition. It is therefore a cooler and more agreeable place and as such is frequented by both sexes for the purposes of conversation, discussion, and indoor pursuits. Female visitors are usually received in the *bilieh*, but male visitors are invariably received in the *ruai* and only enter the bilieh when invited to do so to be introduced to the women and to share the meals. They sleep in the *ruai* along with the boys and bachelors, and sit there all day when they have nothing better to do, conversing with the head of the family and chewing betel. The floor is carpeted with thick and heavy mats of cane interlaced with narrow strips of beaten bark. Over these are spread other mats of thinner and finer texture. There is a small fireplace between this and the next *ruai* for the men to warm themselves at when they get up, as they usually do, in the chill of the morning, before the sun has risen above the trees; the fire is allowed to go out in the middle of the day, but is revived towards the evening when it is getting dark, but still too early to light the torches.

Some *ruais* are provided with a *panggan* or bedstead with plank sides in one corner of the room for the men to sleep in, but this is not always the case. If the head of the family has made it for his own use and if he be a chief or rich man he will fix his gongs of various kinds around it for the sake of show; his weapons will be within reach and his war dress will hang from the roof where it can be seen to best advantage —a skull cap of wickerwork with its nodding plumes, and a skin jacket decorated with the tail feathers of the war bird of the tribe. But the most valuable ornament in the *ruai* by far is

quarter with rice and fill up with water and when it simmers cover it with leaves. Before the arrival of Europeans the Dyaks used earthen *prions* made by themselves."

5: Roth E-4 (no date) 1892 CC6 Iban OC6

353 But the most valuable ornament in the ruai by far is
523 of course the bunch of human heads which hangs over the fireplace
727 like a bunch of fruit; these are the heads obtained on various warpaths by various members of the family, dead and living, and are handed down from father to son as the most precious heirlooms, more precious even than the ancient jars which they
523 prize so highly. The next ornament of paramount importance
353 is the bag of charms which is fastened to the centrepost and which is in like manner handed down from generation to generation and about which there is a great to do if any of the charms are lost or stolen.[1] Other posts are often adorned with trophies of the chase, horns and such like of deer and wild cattle and the heads of animals such as bears, monkeys, and crocodiles killed by the young boys. The empty sheaths of the swords and knives of the family are suspended on wooden hooks, while the naked blades are placed in racks above their heads.

342 The *tanju* or open-air platform is in front of the *ruai* and is railed at the edge, but the rail is often so slight that it is unsafe to lean against it. The flooring is usually of ironwood the better to stand exposure to the weather. It is used as a lounge in the evening, the view from it being extensive and the breeze refreshing. While the sun is shining the paddy is put out to
356 dry as are the clothes and a variety of other things. The family whetstone and dye vat are kept here under the eaves of the roof.

The *sadau* or loft is used to stow away the baskets and agricultural instruments during the season they are not in use.
251 The paddy is stowed away here in tubs of bark and also the seed for next year's farm.[2] Young women often sleep here
513 and so do the young men and boys who are unprovided with curtains when the mosquitoes and sandflies are troublesome
[824] down below. They burn a fragrant bark to keep off the mosquitoes.

166 Whenever it is deemed expedient by the Sea Dyaks to shift
361 from one locality to another, or to abandon an old habitation in
621 favour of a new one, a general meeting is convened to consider the proposition and the desirability of the measure is fully discussed.[3] If a move be decided upon a few experienced men

[1] While on the Rejang river "a Kanowit gave me the tusk of a crocodile which devoured his sister, and showed me a boar's tusk which was lost to his family by an uncle who was killed by a Ukiet and to recover which he a few years ago killed the Ukiet. He showed me another tusk which was dropped by one of the boars which attacked and destroyed the house of an ancestor living at Lakut." Articles like these appear to constitute their charms.

[2] The Kyans, Kiñahs, and Lanahans stow their paddy in barns built for the purpose. The floor is six feet above the ground, and the posts are encircled with circular wooden discs to keep off the rats.

[3] The Kiñahs move away every few years so as to be always near heavy bush which they prefer for their farms.

6: Freeman E-5 (1949-1951) 1958 OC6 Iban OC6

THE FAMILY SYSTEM OF THE IBAN OF BORNEO

THE FAMILY APARTMENT

While they may vary slightly in width, all of the separate family apartments of an Iban long-house are basically similar in construction. Each apartment always consists of a single walled room (with an attic above it), a section of the roofed gallery, and a division of the open platform which fronts the whole house. Of these, the walled room or *bilek* is by far the most important. First and foremost the *bilek* is the family parlour: the normal location for cooking, eating, sleeping, and a host of domestic tasks. But not only is the *bilek* the setting for a family's mundane life, it is also the place where all of its valued heirloom property is displayed or stored. At the back of each parlour stands the family's collection of *tajau*—massive pottery jars, usually of Chinese manufacture, one or other of which, because of its great age, may have become an object of religious veneration. Stacked in the corners or suspended from the side walls is the family's bronze ware: gongs of many shapes and sizes, trays and boxes for use in the ceremony of betel chewing, and perhaps a Malay cannon or two. Other family possessions, less durable and more rarely used, resplendent *ikat* fabrics, the silver jewellery and bead garments of the women, the feather head-dresses and traditional accoutrements of the men, are securely stored away and only brought out on ritual or gala occasions. All of these valuables make up an important part of the family estate.

Ranged along the back of the long-house, then, are a series of family rooms, each divided from its neighbour by a side wall of planks or bark. Each of these rooms is connected by a hinged door (which may be barred from within) to the great gallery (*ruai*) of the long-house, which serves as a kind of general thoroughfare and is the principal venue of the community's social and ritual life. Of this gallery each family possesses its own section, and although the whole of the *ruai* is ordinarily open to all members of the long-house, each family retains the prescriptive right to cordon off its own part whenever, for ritual reasons, the need arises. Here and there, in about the centre of the *ruai*, in smoke-blackened clusters, hang the trophy heads or *antu pala*, with which so many of the most cherished values and beliefs of the Iban are associated. But each cluster is always the private property of the family on whose section of the gallery it hangs, for trophy heads are never owned by the long-house as a whole.

From each family division of the gallery an opening gives access to the open platform, or *tanju*, which like the *ruai* runs from end to end of the long-house, providing a space where rice may be sunned and garments dried. Of this platform, too, each family possesses its own portion.

Each family then, owns and occupies a single apartment (made up of a *bilek*, a *ruai*, and a *tanju*), and it is the joining together of a series of these

7:Gomes M-5 (ca. 1890)1911 OC6 Iban OC6

number of families living in the house, and these range from three or four to forty or fifty.

Each family has its own portion of this *ruai*, and in each there is a small fireplace, which consists of a slab of stone, at which the men warm themselves, when they get up, as they usually do, in the chill of the early morning before the sun has risen.

Over this fireplace hangs the most valuable ornament in the eyes of the Dyak, the bunch of human heads. These are the heads obtained when on the warpath by various members of the family—dead and living—and are handed down from father to son as the most precious heirlooms—more precious, indeed, than the ancient jars which the Dyaks prize so highly.

The posts in this public covered veranda are often adorned with the horns of deer and the tusks of wild boars—trophies of the chase. The empty sheaths of swords are suspended on these horns or from wooden hooks, while the naked blades are placed in racks overhead.

On one side of this long public hall is a row of doors. Each of these leads into a separate room, or *bilik*, which is occupied by a family. The doors open outwards, and each is closed by means of a heavy weight secured to a thong fastened to the inside. If the room be unusually large, it may have two doors for the sake of convenience.

This room serves several purposes. It serves as a kitchen, and in one corner there is a fireplace where the food is cooked. This fireplace is set against the wall of the veranda, and resembles an open cupboard. The lowest shelf rests on the floor, and is boarded all round and filled with clay. This forms the fireplace, and is furnished with a few stones upon which the pots are set

7:Gomes M-5 (ca. 1890)1911 OC6 Iban OC6

342 for cooking. The shelf immediately above the fireplace
354 is set apart for smoking fish. The shelves above are filled with firewood, which is thoroughly dried by the smoke and ready for use. As the smoke from the wood fire is not conducted through the roof by any kind of chimney, it spreads itself through the loft, and blackens the beams and rafters of the roof.

342 This room also serves as a dining-room. When the
264 food is cooked, mats are spread here, and the inmates
352 squat on the floor to eat their meal. There is no furniture, the floor serving the double purpose of table and chairs.

342 This *bilik* also serves as a bedroom. At night the mats
513 for sleeping on are spread out here, and the mosquito-curtains hung up.

342 There is no window to let in the air and light, but a
354 portion of the roof is so constructed that it can be raised a foot or two, and kept open by means of a stick.

353 Round the three sides of this room are ranged the treasured valuables of the Dyaks—old jars, some of which
523 are of great value, and brass gongs, and guns. Their cups and plates are hung up in rows flat against the walls. The flooring is the same as that of the veranda, and is made of split palm or bamboo tied down with cane.
356 The floor is swept after a fashion, the refuse falling through the flooring to the ground underneath. But the room is stuffy, and not such a pleasant place as the
231 open veranda. The pigs and poultry occupy the waste space under the house.

342 From the *bilik* there is a ladder which leads to an upper
417 room, or loft (*sadau*), where they keep their tools and store their paddy. If the family be a large one, the
573 young unmarried girls sleep in this loft, the boys and young men sleeping outside in the veranda.

Some families use the sadau as a sleeping area, and young, unmarried girls spend their nights there. Occasionally, rituals are held in the sadau, such as the important ordination of the shaman (bebangun ka Manang). If omen birds alight on the roof, offerings are made to them in the sadau and one basket is tied at the head of the ladder leading to the sadau in each bilik.[13]

4. Bilik[14]

The family living room or bilik is the most important part of the longhouse, the names of the room and family being coterminous (kami Sabilik, "we (exclusive pronoun) of our family"). The outer bilik wall is used by some families to identify themselves, with painted designs, crosses, pictures of the Malaysian King and Queen, or used air-tickets. Within the bilik, walls are covered with old newspapers, Government posters, pictures of Malay, Indian, or Chinese movie stars, and, in one frame, a collection of all the photographs friends and acquaintances have given them.

The bilik is a rectangular space, enclosed by four walls, and varying considerably in size and appointments even in the same house. In more modern houses, the dapor or cooking area is separated by a wall from the main section of the bilik. At night, the front and rear doors are

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[13] In one offering (miring) ceremony I observed, 27 persons gathered to avert death from Rumah Nyelang on which an owl (burong pok) alighted. The entire ceremony was carried on in the sadau under the roof where the owl had rested.

[14] This spelling differs from Freeman's bilik (1970:2), but is consonant with Scott (1955:29) and current spellings of Iban. The final vowel is a glide and best represented by the phoneme /i/, for in Iban the letter "e" is commonly used to indicate a schwa.

5. Tiko

342 A recent innovation in three houses, including Rumah Imba and
178 Ryelang, is the construction of a guest room instead of the tanju' section by the tuai rumah and his deputy (mandal). At Rumah Imba, there are two such rooms, called tiko (from portico, possibly), both fitted with sliding iron-grill doors that are locked when the tiko are not in use. [353] Pictures of the late parents of the tuai rumah and former colonial officers hang on the outer wall, and windows open from each wall onto the adjacent tanju'. Tikai for covering the padong ruai are stored in the tiko where they are more immediately accessible than in the bilik or sadau.

F. Social Composition of the Longhouse

621 A longhouse community is comprised of a core of cognatic kinsmen
602 and their affines. As descent is reckoned ambilineally and affiliation bilaterally, most of the members of the longhouse are able to establish some degree of relationship to some or almost all the other members of the house. The rationale offered by one informant, Anyau Bakit, was that,

[829]

> "we know our own and they know us. In former times, people had many taboos and it was easier to get along with people who had the same taboos. Also, with fellow kinsmen, you had some idea about their characters - whether they were good or bad. So, that, if some stranger came to your house, you wanted to find out his background before he took up residence there."

Rumah Ryala at Sungai Aup was founded three generations or approximately sixty years ago by a small group of kinsmen centering around

484 782 Upon the return of a man from a trip offerings of thanksgiving were made. In 1971, when Minggu anak Janti of Rumah Nyala returned on leave from the Commandos, a special service called niat ("Good Luck") was observed at Bukit Aup. Sacrifices were made and special food prepared to give thanks for the safe return of Minggu after months away from home.

181 602 Mobility among the Ibans is not limited to physical movement but includes also the flexibility which marks their social organization and culture. We have discussed the relative ease of attachment to and detachment from the bilik-family, and how the very vagueness of the boundaries of the kin-group, kaban, permits inclusion of members of other ethnic groups as well as other Ibans. Ibans who marry members of other groups still are included in their natal kin-group and looked to for hospitality and other [597] help by their kinsmen. In the problematic area of land tenure and the law which prohibits Chinese owning land in the Native Area, several pengulu have adopted Chinese men as grandsons, thereby legitimizing land holdings of the Chinese in the Native Area.

177 [183] [353] The adoption of values and styles of other ethnic groups also is related to the cultural mobility of the Ibans, and even in remote longhouses it is not uncommon to find walls plastered with pictures from the "Asia Magazine" or American west coast newspapers.[21] [291] [302] Iban young men and women are sensitive to new styles (Iban, stail), and many young men are natty dressers with long hair, low-slung flair trousers and even simulated leather

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[21] These are shipped in large quantities to local shopkeepers and used for wrapping purchases.